

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF BODMIN

FOR THE YEAR 1913.



BODMIN :

PRINTED BY E. T. & M. CRABB, FORE STREET.

TO THE BODMIN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report as to the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Urban District of BODMIN for the year ended 31st December, 1913.

Natural Conditions.

The District comprises an area of 2797·284 acres, consisting of the Town of Bodmin, about 150 acres, and the remainder chiefly cultivated land lying mostly on the North and East sides.

The Town stands in a hollow basin and is practically surrounded by fairly high hills which afford excellent shelter from high and cold winds.

The general formation of the District is hilly; the Town itself varies from 220 to 450 feet above sea level. Being equidistant at about 12 miles North and South from the sea and having the extensive Bodmin Moors to the North-East, it enjoys a varying and healthy climate, which is mostly of a humid nature.

Population.

The total population (estimated) including Public Institutions is 5,785, comprised as follows:—

Borough	4179
Asylum	1121
Barracks	299
H. M. Prisons	100
Workhouse	86
	<hr/>
	5785

The housing accommodation in the District is very good and the general condition of the inhabitants is most satisfactory.

There is no chief outstanding occupation of the inhabitants beyond the usual branches of trade and agriculture but considerable activity is taking place in the Clay trade in close proximity to the Town and there is every probability of this developing into the largest industry and employer of labour in the locality.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

The Water Supply, owned by the "Bodmin Water Works Company," continues excellent in quality and there is an abundant and practically unlimited supply, which conduces to the cleanliness and healthiness of the Town.

There is only one stream or leat actually within the District and this flows through the Town and forms the natural watercourse for most of the rainfall. Two other streams form the boundary of the Borough for some considerable distance and no evidence of pollution has been traced in either stream and no complaints have been received during the year.

The Town is provided with an excellent sewerage system and drainage for surface water.

The sewage and a considerable portion of the storm water is carried by gravitation to the Disposal Works at Scarlett's Well, which lies about half a mile to the N.W. of the Town, where it is treated on the Septic Tank system with percolating filters and finally by irrigation over the land. The effluent is well clarified and percolates into a natural stream which forms a tributary to the river Camel, and no complaints have been received during the year as to any undue pollution of the stream or river.

The sewerage system has been extended during the year in both the East and West ends of the Town; that in the latter has opened up a very large area for Building Purposes and has dispensed with the temporary method of treating the sewage by irrigation over the land which at times became very objection-

able owing to its nearness to the Town. Practically the whole of the Town is now provided with a sewerage system and only 3 cess pits are in use to my knowledge in the Town.

The closet accommodation in the Town is mostly on the water carriage system and is fairly satisfactory and is being considerably improved each year.

The sewers and many of the storm-water drains have been flushed and disinfected periodically right through the year and there is no doubt this is very beneficial to the health of the District.

No privies have been found in the Town during the year.

The arrangements for the removal of refuse and cleansings of Ashpits which is carried out by the Council's employees has been most satisfactory and the absence of any complaint during my inspections is most marked.

The Inspection of the District has been regularly carried on and nearly 300 formal visits have been made by the Sanitary Inspector and over 80 by the Medical Officer of Health.

No Hospital accommodation is provided for Infectious Diseases and fortunately there has been no serious outbreak for very many years. The joint conference of three adjoining and the Local Authority came to no definite conclusion and as far as I am aware the matter has fallen through.

No Chemical or Bacteriological work is undertaken and nothing has been submitted to the Public Analyst for report.

Several cases, viz., 17, of Diphtheria have occurred during the year and I visited the various premises, accompanied by the Sanitary Inspector, but no evidence could be found in either case of the cause of the infection and only a few minor defects in the Sanitary arrangements were discovered, none of which in themselves were considered likely causes of the

infection.

All the School premises of the Town have been thoroughly inspected and in all cases were found in very fair Sanitary condition. A special report on each School was made specifying the Sanitary defects which were found and on subsequent inspections most of the defects reported had been remedied or were receiving attention. The School Authorities were recommended to disinfect their School premises during the week-end holiday by means of vaporizers and a suggested method of carrying out the work has been sent them and is now under consideration.

No outbreak of Infectious Disease has occurred during the year necessitating the issue of any closing order.

Food Supply.

The wholesomeness of the milk and general food supply in the District is good and the premises where same is prepared and offered for sale are in a good sanitary condition.

The Dairies and Milkshops are very well kept and are in very fair sanitary condition.

The Cowsheds are usually only used for housing the cows for milking purposes during the summer and by night only during the severe portions of the winter. All cows are turned out by day.

No regulations have been adopted and no action taken as to Inspection for Tuberculosis under the Orders of 1885 and 1899.

The Bakehouses and Slaughter Houses have been frequently inspected and were found in good condition and very well kept.

No articles were seized as being considered unfit for food and no samples taken for analysis. No carcasses or parts of animals have been condemned as being Tuberculous.

Factories and Workshops.

There are no Factories in the District but the Workshops and Workplaces have been inspected occasionally and were generally found in good sanitary condition.

Housing Accommodation.

The Housing Accommodation in the District is fairly equal to the demand as far as the working classes are concerned, but there is a demand for more houses of a residential nature, and more of these latter class might be provided with advantage to the District.

The House to House Inspections under the Act of 1909 has been continued during the year and 64 houses have been inspected and reported on and a considerable number of the defects reported during 1912 and this year have been remedied. but there are some cases where the necessary repairs, etc., have not yet been commenced.

All the Corporation properties reported on have now been put into a good state of repair.

In the majority of cases the defects found have been the unsanitary condition or lack of paving to court-yards and back kitchens and the absence of light and ventilation to sanitary conveniences.

Three adjoining houses were reported as being unfit for human habitation and have ceased to be occupied and the property has since been acquired by the Town Council and will probably be pulled down to effect street improvements.

Vital Statistics.

(TABLES I—IV.)

The general healthiness of the District continues very good although the death rate for this year is slightly in advance of last year as will be seen in the tables attached to this report giving the vital statistics

of the District and the cases of Infectious Diseases notified.

The death rate for the Borough based on the population estimated to the middle of March, 1913, is 15·973 per 1,000 as against 12 for 1912.

The death rate for the whole District, including the Public Institutions, is 31·445 per 1,000, as against 27·423 in 1912.

There were 182 deaths registered in the District (90 males and 92 females). Of these 56 occurred in the Borough (22 males and 34 females) and 7 of the deaths in Public Institutions were transferable to the Borough, being natives.

There were 26 deaths of persons over 70 years, 10 over 80 years and 2 over 90 years of age. Of the 26 over 70 years 22 died in and were residents of the Urban District; 3 died in the Union Workhouse and were natives of the Borough, and one died in the Asylum who was also a native.

The birth rate for the year is 20·579 per 1,000, the number of births being 86 (43 males and 43 females).

Infectious Diseases.

Diphtheria.—17 cases were notified and one death occurred at the age of 16.

Tuberculosis —27 cases were notified.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis.—4 deaths occurred. (1 between 5 and 15 years 2 between 15 and 27 years, and 1 between 45 and 65 years).

No Pythisis Sanatorium or Hospital accommodation is provided.

Erysipelas.—2 cases were notified.

Poliomyelitis —2 cases were notified, (1 under 5 years and 1 between 15 and 25 years). The case under 5 years occurred at Coronation Terrace, notified 19th November, and the patient recovered. The other case occurred at Carminnow, notified 21st December, and ended fatally. I visited both

premises, which are situated about two miles apart, and could find nothing to account for the outbreak in either case.

Measles.—10 cases were notified but no deaths occurred.

Special report on the cases of Diphtheria occurring in the Borough from September to November, 1913.

To the Bodmin Town Council.

Gentlemen,

As requested by the Council I have made an investigation into the cases of Diphtheria which have been notified since the beginning of September last, and altogether nine cases have been notified as follows :—September, 2 ; October, 4 ; November, 3 ; total, 9.

I have visited most of the cases and could not find any defects in the drainage or condition of the various premises to suggest a likely cause of the outbreak.

With regard to the two cases in September, one was a schoolboy and the other an adult who had been away from Bodmin on a visit to Exeter.

As to the four cases in October, one, an adult, occurred at Westheath ; another, an adult, at Railway Terrace, and the latter is supposed to have been contracted at St. Dennis where it was stated the Disease is very prevalent. The remaining two cases were school children who were attending different schools, but who were living in the same street, viz., Crockwell street.

With reference to the three cases in November, the first two were school children attending the same school, viz., Church of England School, and both their

parents were employed at the Post Office. The third case was a youth also employed at the Post Office. I visited the Post Office and examined the Sanitary arrangements and the premises generally and found everything most satisfactory. I was there informed that the first two cases had been reported to the Chief Medical Officer of the Postal Service in London who gave instructions that the parents of the two children affected need not absent themselves from duty. The third case, that of the youth who is employed as a Telegraph messenger, was notified subsequently to the above order.

I have been unable to discover any evidence of direct transmission of the disease from one case to another or to trace the origin of the disease in either case.

Bodmin, 21st November, 1913.

Generally.

In cases of suspected Diphtheria I recommend that all Medical Practitioners be requested to submit swabs for Bacteriological examination.

I also recommend that supplies of Antitoxin be granted to all Medical Practitioners and I suggest the name of Messrs. Ferris & Co., of Bristol, for both the submitting of swabs and obtaining supplies of Antitoxin.

I consider the general sanitary condition of the District is very satisfactory and I have no further special recommendations to make.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

B. GIDLEY DERRY,

Medical Officer of Health.

